The United Nations adopted the Minnesota Protocol in 1991 as a global standard to investigate suspicious and unlawful deaths. The UN commissioned The Advocates to help update the Minnesota Protocol to meet the needs of the 21st century and better reflect changes in law and advancements in forensic science. The revised Minnesota Protocol is to be published in 2016.

The Minnesota Protocol has been used in investigations throughout the world, including in Rwanda, Bosnia, Guatemala, East Timor, and Peru.